

Dublin And Munster Presbytery

Presbyterian Church In Ireland

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February 1995

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Sunday School Report

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Adelaide Road Donore

The Christmas period proved to be busy but worthwhile. Sadly Senator Gordon Wilson was unable to speak at our 'Civic Carol Service' due to the untimely death of his son Peter in a car accident. We extend to his family our sympathy and love at this sad time. A very large congregation, none the less, attended in the presence of the Lord Mayor of Dublin.

The children of 'Sunday Special' put on a splendid musical this Christmas called 'Nativity Blues' and the Community Carol Service on Wednesday lunchtime before Christmas was the best attended ever, with approximately 180 present. Members of our community projects, Dolebusters, Playgroup and Mother and Toddlers took part.

We look forward to a visit from the musicians of 'All Souls Langham Place' on Sunday evening the 19th. of February 1995 at 7:00 pm for a prayer service to which all are warmly invited.



On Saturday morning 11th. March we hope to hold a reunion for the children of the community who attended our summer Holiday Club, and this will be followed by an all age Worship Service in church the next morning Sunday 12th. at 11:00 am.

Adelaide Road Donore are next on R.T.E. Radio 1 on Mothers Day Sunday 26th. March at 10:50 am, and the youth club hope to hold their annual 'House Party' at Avoca Manor on Palm Sunday Weekend.

Rev. Frank P. Sellar

Aghada And Trinity, Cork

Who says ministers do no work during the week? So far from there being one DISCIPLE Bible Study based in Trinity, (as mentioned in the previous Link-Up) groups meet on both Tuesday mornings and evenings and are finding the course both demanding and rewarding. The membership covers a variety of churches and localities. A smaller group of Presbyterians meets on Wednesday lunchtimes. Having read through the book of Acts, we have now embarked on a study of Romans with the help of John Stott's recent commentary.

These studies meet in the comfort of our small hall which is also our worship centre until a new heating boiler can be installed into the church building. We are grateful for the anonymous gift of a new carpet which was in place in time for the **baptism** of James Meeke in 27th. November. Our prayers and good wishes are with James and his parents Rodney (formerly of Rathgar) and Sheila and sister Joanna.

The experimental service on the 16th. October concluded with an opportunity for the congregation to fill in evaluation sheets. Having analysed the mainly favourable responses the Kirk Session has agreed that after we return to the 'big church' some 'alternative services' will be held in the small hall. A good example of what can be achieved there was our candlelit carol service on 23rd. December. It was good to see so many from outside the church attending. Folk from Aghada, Trinity and the Disciple groups enjoyed our post Christmas party on 6th. January.

Forthcoming events include a discussion type meeting in the hall to mark the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity on Thursday 26th. January at 8:00 pm. This is being held to provide a more face to face kind of opportunity for dialogue and friendship than seems possible in the usual formal services.

It was a delight to welcome back many family visitors to Aghada for the Christmas Eve service which was well attended. Shadows, however, have been cast by the deaths of folk close to the Jeffery and Tait families: Evelyn Smith, Arthur Good and Ernest Cooper. May the light of Christ bring hope this new year.

We are looking forward to visits from Prof. Finlay Holmes on 12th. February, Rev. Alastair Bill, convener of Home Mission, on 19th. February and Rev. Ruth Patterson on 5th. March.

Rev. John Faris

Social Witness Southern Development Committee

Our first conference was held at Abbey Presbyterian Church on Saturday 1st. October. We were pleased to have two dozen folk attending from a variety of congregations throughout the Presbytery.

We chose the title 'Valuable Work - Valuable People' out of a sense that people would like to be more involved in caring for people in Christ's name but may feel that they are too few in numbers or ill-equipped to be useful.

In line with the **International Year of the Family** we had presentations on working with mothers and children from Abbey Day Nursery, with unemployed people from Adelaide Road Dolebusters and with the elderly from Tritonville Close.

General impressions were that a congregation can grow into involvement provided that proper research is done and there is patience in getting the interest and trust of the local Community.

Joe Campbell gave us a stimulating keynote paper, beginning with his own faith journey. As a secondary school teacher in West Belfast he realised that his evangelical faith did not connect with where young people were. He wanted to become a friend as well as a teacher. He became a youth leader with City of Belfast YMCA and began to be involved with job creation as well as the usual youth club programmes. One aspect was relating to the Roman Catholic community. His work with Frontier Youth Trust was to help churches and Christians reach out to young people not touched by conventional youth activities.

Jesus 'manifesto' in Luke 4:17-19 suggests that social and spiritual concerns are connected - if Jesus is to be real, He must be real in the social dimension also. We must watch the tendency to equate success with spiritual results, with the approach: 'We do our social action to get people to become Christians; if they don't respond, we have failed.' When the ten lepers were healed, only one of them returned to give thanks. Does this mean that Jesus had failed? If work is done for God, a poor response does not mean that it is a failure. Jesus did not unheal the nine ungrateful people. Much social involvement by Christians may seem to be 'unfruitful' but should not on that account be avoided.

Joe felt that many Presbyterians have failed to take Jesus seriously on issues affecting ordinary people; e.g. there are many serious questions about social welfare, but we spend our energy on protests about Sunday trading. Christians need a sense of priesthood - standing before God on behalf of people.

An example was of someone taking pictures of an unchurched youth group and (with their permission) showing the pictures to the church mid-week meeting, to stimulate their prayer and concern.

Poverty is mentioned 286 times in the Bible. If we literally cut out all those references our Bible would fall to bits! Jesus deliberately spent time with the marginalised 'write offs' of his society: children, women and tax collectors. There needs to be a willingness to set new priorities and have new attitudes. Jesus never told the poor that they were sinners; His denunciations were for the privileged Pharisees. He came alongside people without any trace of paternalism or creating dependency. The implications may be difficult. A church is involved with a project for single mothers and wants to affirm the dignity of the members by involving them in decisions. What if they want to raise funds by a raffle?

Joe also referred to Jeremiah 29:4-7, the Lord's command to the exiles to 'seek the peace / shalom' of the city of Babylon. The exiles had different possible reactions to the plight. They might (1) have tried to escape back to Judah (2) have tried to foul up the system in their captivity (3) have kept as separate as possible (4) have merged into Babylonian society and lost their identity altogether. Their proper approach was to be a positive engagement, all the while understanding that they had another home. There is a clear parallel for Christians as 'strangers and exiles on earth'. We need to watch the danger of worshipping affluence and success, ignoring the poor (tendencies identifiable in Judah before the exile). A boy who had avoided a prison sentence because of evidence from Christian youth workers remarked to Joe: 'I didn't know Christians cared about people like me'.

Churches need a vision outside their own circle, to be aware what it is like (e.g.) for one parent families in the district. We could be creative in our use of resources. Jeremiah bought a field as a sign of hope (Jeremiah ch.32). Perhaps individuals or congregations could invest money in property in 'run down' areas as a sign of involvement and confidence.

Rev. John Faris



Arklow And Greystones

Hello, everybody! Hope you have had a wonderful Christmas and a great beginning to 1995! How good is our God to give us His Son!

We are enjoying a lovely sense of the presence of God. His comfort surrounds William, Brian and Emily Kearon (Arklow) and their family circle after the death of Leslie and Vi Kearon in a car accident in Donegal. Brian Cross (Greystones) is also experiencing the same comfort after his mother, Alice, died in her 94th. year. O the wonder of having a living Saviour, who has conquered death and gives us eternal life!

Harvest Thanksgiving in Arklow saw the visit of John Corcoran (Irish Mission) while Robert McMullan was our guest in Greystones. Other visitors recently were Des and Jenny Lewis who explained how their work with Romanian orphans began, and Michael Blythman who told us about A.C.E.T.

There is a lot of local talent springing up. Pauline Bourke, sister of our organist, Ann-Marie, in Arklow is an exceptionally fine mezzo-soprano. She sang recently in a concert in Wexford. Her rendering of 'O Holy Night' and 'Silent Night' among other pieces was inspiring.

In another sphere of art, early December saw the premiere of 'The Connivers'. This film shot mostly in Greystones, was directed by David Caffrey and produced by Conor O'Donnell, two local lads who have set up 'Moonshine Films'. Most of the actors are also local. The story is about what two local lads get up to during the summer holidays. It's a hoot! Ask for a showing in your local cinema or try to see it at the Dublin Film Festival to be held from 7th. to 16th. March 1995.

Greystones Y.W.C.A. ended its Centenary Year with a Thanksgiving Service in 'Coolnagreina'. Three mountain ash trees were planted to commemorate the first 100 years, and the local Committee is confident for the future.

Presbytery Commissions encouraged us greatly - in Arklow at the visitation when the need for a full-time worker was



stressed - and in Greystones at the Ordination service of our two new Elders, Alan Foster and Andrew Lee. Thank you, Moderator and members of Presbytery!

The Christmas Season was a great time this year. Of course it was hectic but our young people in both congregations excelled themselves at their special services. Also, we sang with great gusto as Arklow Silver Band (sponsored by Armitage Shanks) provided the music at Greystones' Carol Service. Our Arklow folk, with some from Greystones, sang carols at Rathdrum Hospital. Even some of the patients sang solos! The Matron, Sister Austin, entertained us right presidentially. Our children brought toys which were passed onto the Salvation Army. Then, after Christmas, we had a fun night with games, video and a meal at Charlesland Golf and Country Club Hotel. Yes, we had 'a whale of a time'! Hope you had too!

In Arklow, Aaron Joseph Scott, second son of Liam Murphy and Sandra Hall, was baptised, while Clive and Margaret Crammond are rejoicing in the birth of their child, Kayleigh. In Greystones we join with Evin and Karen Doyle in their joy at the birth of their second son, Sam Nathan, and with Boby and Joy Davison at the safe 'arrival' of Luke, their second child.

God give you His joy right through this year!

Rev. Jim Carson

Athy And Naas

HARVEST:

Our harvest Thanksgiving Service in Naas, the 25th. September, was conducted by the Rev. Dr. R MacDermott (Sandymount). On the following Sunday, Athy's evening harvest service was very well attended by members of the local churches.

On Sunday 9th. October the Rev. Florence Taylor took our services whilst I conducted the harvest services in Cavan.

MISSION:

On the 16th. of October 1994 we had the privilege of having Miss. Mabel Colson (missionary from Brazil) address us on her work among the Caiua Indians. For her talk she used slides which were very informative showing us photographs of her students and helping us to pray for them. The



children thoroughly enjoyed themselves as she dressed them up in local Brazilian / Indian fashion, even arming them with bows and arrows.

BAPTISM:

Samuel Charles Johnston, infant son of Mark and Marilyn was baptised on December the 10th. 1994. This took place in Naas Presbyterian Church.

GIFT DAY SERVICE:

This was led by the children. In Athy the young people formed a choir introducing us to modern hymns as well as traditional Christmas Carols. Their gifts were taken to Dublin City Mission for distribution. In Naas, twins - Jessica and Verity Lawrence played carols on the recorder and Sandra Israel sang Silent Night. Gifts were given to the local St. Vincent de Paul branch.

NEW COMMUNICANT:

It was our privilege on Sunday 1st. January to receive Mr. Nigel Petrie as a new communicant in Naas Church.

WEEK OF PRAYER FOR CHRISTIAN UNITY:

We hope to host the united Christian Unity Service in Athy Presbyterian Church on Sunday 22nd. January at 3:30 pm. Our guest speaker is the Rev. L Crampton from Athy Church of Ireland. Also taking part are Frs. Kevin Rice, Philip Dennehy and Ailbe O'Connor.

On Tuesday 24th. January as part of the Christian Unity celebrations I have been invited to Scoil Mhuire in Athy to speak about my faith, Presbyterianism, and to answer questions from the students. Afterwards the local Clergy are taking the school assembly which is on the theme of Christian Unity.

WOMEN'S WORLD DAY OF PRAYER:

The community of Naas are coming together to Naas Presbyterian Church on March 3rd. for the Women's World Day of Prayer. Our guest speaker is Miss. Jean Binnie from Rathgar. We are looking forward to a good attendance.

R.T.E. Radio:

R.T.E. Radio are broadcasting live from Athy Presbyterian Church on 19th. February at 10:50 am. The congregation is delighted at this opportunity and are looking forward to it.

FELLOWSHIP NIGHT:

We have been studying the booklet "About Being A Presbyterian" at our fellowship night which meets in the manse.

POSSIBLE TWINNING WITH FIRST COMBER:

Our congregations of Athy and Naas are considering a possible twinning with the congregation of 1st. Comber Presbyterian Church in N. Ireland. The overriding concerns behind such a venture are to glorify God and to help His Church grow in Ireland.

Rev. Ruth Gregg

Carlow

Back in October, after an encouraging harvest service on the Sunday night, we held some special public meetings (Monday to Friday) dealing with questions people sometimes ask. Topics covered included "How do I get in touch with God?" and "Can religion get in the way of knowing God?" People came and all concerned felt it had been a useful week. One of the products of these meetings was the setting up of a weekly Wednesday night gathering for Bible study and prayer.



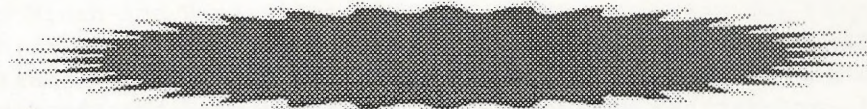
Rev. Stephen Johnston

Fermoy

Hotel Bible Studies:

The hotel Bible studies commenced again in October and ran up to just before Christmas. Our studies this session were from Mark's Gospel with a brief series on the Christmas story in December. It was great to make some new contacts and to see people return week after week to study the Word of God. It's our prayer that the Holy Spirit will use these studies to bring many to see what it really means to be a follower of Jesus Christ.

Rev. Stephen Johnston



Christ Church Limerick

United Presbyterian and Methodist

& Christ Church Shannon

United Church of Ireland, Presbyterian & Methodist

*New Manse: 15 Aylesbury, Clonmacken, Ennis Road, Limerick
Telephone: 061-325325*

CHANGE!

As you can see from the above, our Circuit has been going through many changes. We said goodbye to Tony and Christine Davidson, Mark. Gemma and Ruth, in March. Our shared charge in Shannon received a new Rectory Family: Bob and Patricia Hanna, Amy and Peter, shortly after the Davidson's departure. In July our new Manse Family (David Range, CJ Walter, Micah and Benjamin Walter-Range) moved into Atlantis until the building of 15 Aylesbury was completed in early September. Hilary Park did a tremendous amount of work in getting the new manse built properly. Christ Church folks did the actual moving work from the old manse to the new, and all the net curtains were made by women in the Limerick congregation. Eddie Chamney spent hours drilling for curtain rails and such, and Leslie Cowpar installed lights, the alarm and doorbell, etc.. Pam Butler, from West Cork, came up to make all the curtains. The garden is being planted with slips from various members' gardens. We are grateful to God for EVERYONE's help.

SHANNON:

Our Shannon congregation so successfully hosted a lovely community Harvest that we also held a Community Candlelight Carol Service at 7:00 pm on the 4th. of December, this included the children of St. John's National school who put on a nativity play (after decorating the whole front of the church with a cardboard city -'Bethlehem') In both Limerick and Shannon that day we held a Gift Day, bringing useful items to be distributed to those in special need in our wider communities. Shannon is a community with a large population of people from elsewhere- The number of people in need is high and we crave your prayers that we might share God's vision and plan for Shannon.

FAMILY NEWS:

Newborns in our midst: Richard and Richmond Akpan, Mairead Hill, and Matthew Marshall-Ryan. Our sympathies to: the family

and friends of Doris Mulligan; and to the Wisemans, Hills, Gows, Bovenizers, Oldhoeffs and Hampshires whose family circles have been touched by death in the last few months. We remember our house bound and those recently hospitalised and now recuperating: Gordon Cowpar, Maunsell Christy Don Milne, Eddie Bovenizer, Jos Barkman, Dawn Wiseman, Jean Cunningham and David Boreland. With thanks to God, we celebrate Vanessa and Nicole's safe escape from a house fire and Sheena's near electrocution.

OTHER NEWS:

The youth fellowship has gotten off to a good start, with meeting every other week at the Manse and now the church. We are interested in going snow skiing next winter-any other youth groups on our District care to join us? The Youth Fellowship are planning to prepare the food and serve the congregation for our Annual General Meeting on 18th. February and the congregation looks forward to their ambitious "Italian night".



Wendy Greenford successfully passed her Trial Sermon and was officially approved to become a fully accredited local preacher by our Church Council. Louise Hampshire has begun the course and we look forward to more joining the ranks of this very valuable ministry.

To begin the new year 1995, we put out a "Covenant Survey" to determine each members talents and we look forward to putting them to use as we build up the body of Christ in Limerick.

On Sunday the 11th. of December the congregation of Christ Church, Limerick (United Presbyterian and Methodist) had a unique day in the life of the church. After the annual Sunday School service and nativity play, at the regular 11:30 service (which was visited by the Villiers School boarders) the new manse and church extension were opened and blessed by two of the leaders of each of the churches that support Christ Church. At 4:30 that afternoon the new manse held almost 100 people for its first 'Open House', or house warming. The manse, moved into by the new ministers CJ Walter and David Range, and their two boys Micah and Benjamin on 7th. September was open for inspection. Visitors were delighted to 'even be able to look at the upstairs' and rejoiced that the church had obtained such a well appointed and roomy house for the work of ministry in Limerick

and Shannon. There was plenty of food on hand for people to enjoy until 6:45 pm when a short service was held to ask the Lord's blessing on the house. This was led by the former Moderator of the Presbyterian Church, the Very Rev. Dr William Fleming who also gave a short sermon on family life. Members of the congregation read scripture and one sang a solo and all shared together in singing 'Happy the home when God is there'. The President of the Methodist Church, the Rev. Edmund Mawhinney, led in prayers. A word of thanks was offered by a Home Mission representative, the Rev. Alistair Bill, and a presentation of flowers was made to the church member who had headed up the local new manse committee so well, Mrs. Hilary Park. CJ and David also thanked everyone for coming and supporting the moving process so well. Special thanks was offered to the former minister in Limerick, the Rev. Tony Davidson, and his wife Christine who just arrived in time to the service.

Also present at the manse were the President's wife, Mrs. Shirley Mawhinney, the chairman of the Midlands and Southern District of the Methodist Church, the Rev. John Dowse, and the head of Methodist Home Missions, the Rev. Paul Kingston and his wife Audrey. The former Presbyterian superintendent (during the vacancy) the Rev. Bob Cobain, and his wife Edna were present, along with the Church of Ireland Dean Maurice Sirr and his wife Paddy.

After the manse opening the congregation rushed down to the church where, at 8:00 pm, the congregation were pleased to welcome a large number of the community to 'A Service of Lessons and Carols to Commemorate the Opening of the New Church Extension'. At this service the congregation sang favourite carols and were blessed by the excellent singing of the Limerick Choral Union, including solos by Seamus O'Reilly ('The Little Road to Bethlehem') and Harry Howes ('The Wexford Carol'). Brief selections from the prophets of the Old Testament and the Nativity story from the New Testament were read from places around the church by members Beryl Forrester, Mike Watterson, Clinton Greenford, Rosemary Morone and Brian Park. Prayers were led by Val FitzGerald and Mary Milne.

A short history of how the new building came into being was given by Dermot FitzGerald. He noted how the need had been felt for many years to have an additional meeting room plus a better access to the upstairs main hall. This has been accomplished now with a small hall with access from Hanratty's Lane

from which anyone in a wheelchair can easily access either the new room, or the new lift which travels to both the church sanctuary level and the main hall. In addition, a new interior stairwell has been constructed. There has also been a new heating system installed in all three sections of the building. This is a project which has cost in the region of £80,000 and the Christ Church congregation look forward to being able to use these rooms for the benefit of the whole community. For example, a mothers and toddlers group meets every Tuesday morning, and the church supports other organisations including a youth fellowship. Bible studies, Prayer Meetings, and Tear Fund lunches.

The President of the Methodist Church in Ireland, the Rev. Edmund Mawhinney, reflected in his sermon on the theme for the night 'Open Doors' and called the people of God to continue to meet for service and prayer from this place. He declared at the end of his talk. Through the ages, God has moved his people to build houses of prayer and praise, houses for the ministry of Word and Sacrament, houses of refuge and refreshment, houses of comfort and challenge, houses of learning and loving. With gratitude for the extension and refurbishment of Christ Church, we are now gathered to dedicate this house anew in God's Name. Almighty God, we thank you for making us in your image, to share in the ordering of your world. Receive the work of our hands in this place set apart for ministry. Let the doors be opened. Peace be to this house, and to all who enter here. In the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen "

The Former Moderator of the Presbyterian Church in Ireland, the Very Rev. Dr. William Fleming, was also present to represent the other side of Christ Church's historical roots. He led in a responsive 'Prayer of Thanks for the Future' which remembered both our salvation in Christ and our calling to be 'champions of justice and peace' in Limerick and all the world. Brian Park offered a word of thanks to those who participated in the service and those from the community who have supported the church over the years and during this building project. The new husband and wife ministerial team at Christ Church, the Rev. David Range and the Rev. CJ Walter, also helped lead in the service and welcomed everyone who wished view the new buildings to a display of the history (co-ordinated by Anthony O'Connell) of the church and a refreshing cup of tea upstairs. There was a great sense of fellowship all during this day, and

Christ Church has enjoyed an enormous amount of goodwill from around the community. The church looks forward to Gods continuous blessings and the prayerful support of both the Presbyterian and Methodist bodies.

Rev. David Range and Rev. CJ Walter

Christ Church Rathgar

Ordination of New Elders:

On Sunday 9th. October, a commission of Dublin and Munster Presbytery held a service of ordination in the church. At this service, the following were ordained as ruling Elders of the congregation:-

Maureen Collins	Robin Fraser	Robin Petrie
George Strachan	Irene Strachan	Gary Tennant

The commission was led by the Moderator Rev. J. Brogan and the address was given by the Rev. T. Morrow.

Fund Raising:

During this period, three major events were held in the church.

The annual Christmas Bazaar was held on November 12th. and was as usual very well attended. (£9100.00 was raised from the sale) In early December we held an Art Exhibition where an extremely high standard of exhibits were on view. On December 9th. a Gala Musikfest was held in the church with an excellent evening of entertainment from the Stedfast Brass Band and the Dublin Welsh Male Voice Choir (compere - Bill Young).

Community Employment Scheme:

This project, in conjunction with FAS, is now well established. Tangible evidence of this can be seen in the areas of buildings / grounds - cleaning and maintenance. The church Office is efficiently operating three days per week.

Pre- Christmas Services:

The Sunday Service on 11th. of December was led by the Junior Church, who had as their theme 'The Family' of which 1994 has been the International year. The following Sunday, 18th. December, there was a traditional service of Christmas Carols followed by the congregation enjoying mince pies and coffee in the church hall.

George Strachan

Christ Church, Sandymount

Our Harvest Thanksgiving Services were held on Sunday, 25th. September to which we were happy to welcome the Rev. Ruth Gregg of Naas and Athy Presbyterian Churches.

Following the Evening Service a presentation was made to Mrs. Ruth Maybury who has been organist in Christ Church, Sandymount, for 16 years and who has now left to take up another appointment. During her time with us her skilful and enthusiastic playing has greatly enhanced our worship. Thank-you, Ruth, we miss you very much.

We are most grateful to all those who have played for us to date - unfortunately, we are still without a permanent replacement.

In September we said 'Good bye' also to Dorothy Houston who had been a member of the congregation for many years. During the time she was with us she served as a Sunday School teacher and as a member of the Choir.

In latter years she was responsible for the Freewill Offering Scheme; also she was our Agent for The Presbyterian Orphan Society. Dorothy has now left us to live in Clontarf - we wish her well and thank her for her loyal and devoted service over the years.

Annual Sale:

Our Annual Sale took place in November as scheduled. Apart from being a pleasant social occasion for friends to meet, the total amount raised exceeded £2,100.

Carol Service:

Our Carol Services were held on Sunday, 18th December at which various members took part; we welcomed members of our neighbouring congregation, St. Matthew's, Irishtown, to the Evening Service.

Following the Services on 18th December the gifts given by the congregation placed under the Christmas Tree were brought to Dublin Central Mission for distribution.

On Christmas Day we held a Service of Holy Communion at 9.00 am., followed by Morning Worship at 11 o'clock.

WEEK OF PRAYER FOR CHRISTIAN UNITY:

We hope to host the united district Service on Sunday, January 22nd, at 3.00 pm. when we look forward to welcoming the new Parish Priest in Star of the Sea, Father Brian Power, as preacher.

We regret having to record the following deaths:- Mrs. Maud Cochran on 4th. September 1994. Mrs. Gladys Malcolm on 26th. October 1994.

We extend our sincere sympathy to the families thus bereaved.



Clontarf

Presentations:

A social evening was held on the 23 September in Howth Road School for Mr. James Hodgins, at which he was presented with a chair and typewriter, in recognition of his many years of service to the Church as Clerk of Session. We wish him well in his retirement.

New Clerk of Session:

We welcome Mr. Alan Finlay as the new Clerk of Session and Mr. Fred Stirling as Congregational Treasurer and wish them both God's blessing in their new positions.

100th Birthday

On the 12 November Rev. James Brogan presented Miss. Mabel Thompson, on her 100th birthday, a cheque for £250.00 on behalf of President Mary Robinson. Mr. Alan Finlay, Clerk of Session, presented her with a bouquet of flowers from the congregation. In May, Miss. Thompson received a cut glass vase and a framed scroll from the then Lord Mayor, Mr. Thomas MacGoilla.

Harvest Thanksgiving Service:

Our Harvest Thanksgiving Service was held on Sunday 9th. October. On the following Sunday, Miss. Phyllis Caldwell PCI

missionary in Malawi, gave a very interesting talk on her work in Malawi.

Enrolment Service:

The Annual Enrolment Service of the 5th. Company Girls' Brigade and the 32nd. Company Boys' Brigade took place on Sunday 6th. November.

Music and Dancing:

A nostalgic night of music and dancing was held in Howth Road School on Saturday 19th. November. A very enjoyable night was had by all and the proceeds from the night went towards the repair of the lawnmower.



Carol Service:

Our annual carol service by candlelight was held on Sunday evening 11th. December with participation by the Girls' and Boys' Brigades and the PWA. The music was provided by the 'Steadfast Band' as usual. The tea and mince pies which the Ladies Committee served afterwards were very much appreciated. Gifts were left under the Christmas tree for the needy.

Out-reach:

The outreach team, under the leadership of Des Paul and Gillian Topping, held their annual 'Holiday Bible Club' reunion over the New Year, at which approximately 70 children attended. A good time was had by all.

Wedding:

The wedding of Miss Alison McDermott and Mr. Ian Browne took place on 10th. September. We wish them every happiness in their future life together.

Death:

It was with regret that we recorded the death of Mr. James Shaw on the 10th. November - We offer our deepest sympathy to his family.

Valerie J. Dagg



Drogheda

Flower Festival:

In connection with the Drogheda 800 celebrations a flower festival was held in the church from 16th. - 18th. September. The flower club were responsible for the arrangements, and they are to be congratulated for their expertise. Many were the comments on the beautiful examples of the flower arranger's art. Proceeds were in aid of the Dyslexia Association. At the reception of the opening night a member gave a short talk on the work of the association.



Rwanda:

A special collection was taken in aid of the appeal issued by the moderator of the General Assembly for the needs of the refugees in the troubled African land of Rwanda. The splendid sum of £773.00 was realised and sent forward to Church House to be disbursed to those in need.

Harvest Service:

The annual harvest thanksgiving took place on Sunday 16th. October. The special preacher at 7:00 pm was Rev. Dr. F.H. Welshman formerly of Heswell United Reformed church in Merseyside, England. The church was beautifully decorated by the members of the congregation. Other churches in the town gave good support and were welcomed by the minister. Thanks are given to the decorators, the church organist, the preacher and the soloist Mr. W. Cowan, Newry.

New House:

Good wishes to Mrs. Alice Ormiston, organist, as she settles into her new home at Wheaton Hall.

Moderators Appeal:

Church House has announced that a sum in excess of £250,000.00 has been received for the suffering people of Rwanda. This excellent result has been the best response of the church for some considerable time.

Congratulations:

A recent issue of **Trinity Trust News**, the magazine sent to all graduates of **Trinity College Dublin**, showed a picture of sports scholars. Among them was Raymond McIlreavy who obtained

a Rugby Scholarship and is now reading history. He received his secondary education at Wesley College, Dublin.

Earl Haig Fund:

Remembrance Sunday was observed, as usual, on the second Sunday of November. A special collection was taken and forwarded to the British Legion in response to their annual appeal. The amount raised was £126.70.

Presentation:

Miss. Amy Malcolmson was the recipient of a farewell gift from the congregation. Prior to her departure to Kingscourt, appreciation was expressed to her for all the sterling work she had done over the years and good wishes given for many happy years in her new home in the town of her birth.

Congratulations:

James Lee has recently become engaged and all good wishes are extended to him and his fiancée in their future life together.



Christmas Service:

Mrs. Jennifer McCann acted as reader for the Christmas Service on 18th. December assisted by David McCann, Nichola Chambers, Hannah and Peter McCormick and Johnny Armstrong. Rev. Charles McCurdy thanked all who took part and prepared for the service. The church organist, Mrs. Alice Ormiston presided at the organ. Miss Amy Malcolmson provided gifts for the children.

Thanks:

Rev. Charles McCurdy records his sincere thanks to the congregation of Kells Presbyterian Church for their thoughtfulness in making him a presentation after their Carol Service on 20th. December 1994. It was a pleasure to work with such a responsive and supportive congregation.

Rev. Charles McCurdy

Ervey

Harvest Service:

The thanksgiving for harvest took place on Sunday 9th, October 1994. There was a good attendance from all local churches. Very Rev. John Thompson was the special preacher and

was welcomed by the minister. The church was very tastefully decorated by the ladies of the congregation. Thanks were expressed for their work and for the cup of tea after the service.

Carol Service:

St. Mary's Brass and Reed Band made a visit to Ervey church on 4th, December 1994 and led praise for Bible Sunday. Also taking part was the church organist Mrs. O. Gibson who drew up the order of service. A quartet consisting of Kay Gallagher, Gladys Frazer, Marie Cullen and Veronica Sherlock, contributed an item. Rev. C. McCurdy who conducted the service welcomed all present and thanked all who had taken part.

Sunday School Service:

The service on the 18th. December was conducted by the pupils of the Sunday School, assisted by some of the older members of the congregation. The organ was played by Mary and Susan Armstrong, Lindsay and Zara Archibald as well as Mrs. O. Gibson, church organist. Prayers were led by Lindsay, Zara, Andrew, Timothy and Graeme Archibald and Rachel, Robert and Sarah Frazer. In 'the birds and the beasts keep Christmas' Zara Archibald was the reader. Rachel and Robert Frazer, Graeme, Timothy and Andrew Archibald and Sarah Frazer took part. Rev. Charles McCurdy thanked all who had taken part both on the day and in preparation and also Jean Archibald and Peter Brittain for reading the scriptures. Sunday School prizes were distributed to all children.

Earl Haig Fund:

The final total raised for the Earl Haig Fund on Remembrance Sunday was £70.00.

Rev. Charles McCurdy



Dun Laoghaire Presbyterian Church

Another year has gone. Let's hope that the good things of 1994 will continue and grow, and that 1995 will fulfil all our hopes and expectations.

By the time you will read this, many Spring bulbs - already emerging - will be in full bloom. May I, on behalf of the minister and congregation of York Road Presbyterian Church, wish everyone a peaceful, healthy and prosperous new year.

Church Sale:

The total amount raised at our Annual Church Sale last November was £4,282.42. This represents an increase on the previous year by over £600. Our thanks are due to all those who supported the Sale in any way - by donating to the stalls or coming to buy.

P.W.A.:

The P.W.A. has had a busy time with hosting the Conference in York Road on 19th. October (this was most enjoyable and lively and made all of us think hard about the role of the Church), a visit to Blackrock P.W.A. for a 'Gardening Evening', and on 26th October a most interesting and informative talk on Russia (illustrated by beautiful slides) by Paul Caskie.

On the 23rd. November. Bernie McDonnell of Monkstown Chesire Home came to talk to the P.W.A. at one of their afternoon meetings, and on 27th. November the annual Advent Carol Service (followed by mince pies in the Church Hall) took place, the speaker being Rev. Mary Hunter.

Family Service - Community Singing:

On 6th. November, as a change from our usual Sunday Worship, an experimental service took place at which some of the congregation's favourite hymns were sung. Instead of a sermon, Rev. David Caskie gave a brief history of each hymn and a concise background of its composer. This was a most interesting and successful service and I am sure the idea will be repeated at some future date.

Congregational News

Weddings:

30th. June,	Douglas Nicol to Sarah Murray.
17th. September,	Gillian Simmons to Ross Jones.

Baptism:

11th. September, Jennifer Mary Christina White, daughter of Ronan and Diana.

Christmas Day, Kate Elizabeth, daughter of John and Heather Bramhall.

CONGRATULATIONS AND BEST WISHES TO ALL OF THE ABOVE

Deaths:

Mrs. Rita Hamilton, passed away peacefully at Our Lady's Manor, Dalkey.

Emma Kay, formerly of Dundela Park, Sandycove.

Ian A. McFerran, formerly of Altamont Hall and Glenageary.

Evelyn Black, formerly of York House Nursing Home.

Mrs. Martha Patterson, formerly of 3, Newtown Villas, Blackrock, Co. Dublin.

Mrs. Rosemary Mathews, formerly of 12, Cabinteely Crescent, Cabinteely, Co. Dublin.

Unfortunately the only news of former members is sad news.

9th. October (in Glasgow), John Scott, formerly of Killiney and Ramelton.

27th. October (in Newtownards), Betty Leonard, formerly of Dun Laoghaire.

TO THEIR FAMILIES AND FRIENDS WE OFFER OUR DEEPEST SYMPATHY.

We are very sorry to lose two families:

Peter and Isabel Fox, Louise and Jennifer, who have moved to Cambridge, and Paul and Cathy McGuinness and family, who have moved to the country.

Time Out:

A social group for separated, widowed and single persons within the Protestant churches. Regular meetings twice monthly and other events as arranged. Programme available from Cecil Hill (telephone 01 2852076 or Dorothea Richardson (telephone 01 2894325).

James Malseed

Galway

A Sunday School Pageant, toy service, carol service and baptismal service, all rolled into one involved many of the congregation in a family day on 18th. December. It was followed by mince pies, tea, coffee, crisps and minerals.

Preparations are proceeding for the election of the new council in March of this year. The new council will have a number of responsibilities under conveners so that 'ownership' by the congregation of its 'responsibilities' is more real than at present.

Rev. Bob Cobain

Ballinasloe

We are planning to widen our ministry through holding Bible Studies in the local hotel and are planning to extend the prayerful involvement of our membership in the wider work of witness in home and communities. A faithful core is there and they have a burden for their community.

Rev. Bob Cobain



Kells

Harvest Festival:

The Harvest service was held on October 2nd. A good sized congregation was in attendance with visitors from Drogheda, Ervey, Mullingar, and Corboy. Thank you to all those who helped to prepare the church for our celebration of God's faithful provision for body and spirit. Following the service a pleasant afternoon tea was served in the Iona hall.

Church Anniversary:

On Sunday November 20th, Kells celebrated its 125th anniversary. It was a joyful though quiet occasion. An almost full church, including visitors from Ervey and Mullingar, gathered to give thanks to God for the faith and witness of those who established the Presbyterian cause in the town. The sermon - 'Being Reformed Today: Living in the Covenant of Grace' directed thoughts to the present life and witness of the congregation.

Carol Service:

After an absence of two years, Kells congregation held a carol service on December 20th. As always we were glad to have some friends from Ervey with us. The church was beautifully decorated for the occasion and an Australian flavour was added to traditional songs. At the supper in the Iona hall which followed the service, a presentation was made to the Convener of the vacancy, Rev Charles McCurdy, in appreciation for his efforts on behalf of the congregation during the year.

Week of Prayer for Christian Unity:

A combined service with the Church of Ireland congregation will take place in the Presbyterian Church on Sunday January 15th. at 9:45 am. The preacher will be the Rev. William Ritchie, Rector of St. Columba's, Kells.

An ecumenical service will take place on Wednesday January 18th at 8:00 pm in St. Columba's Church of Ireland, Kells. A new venture in the Week of Prayer will be evening reflections on the quest for Christian unity. These will be held each evening from January 19th. - 25th at 8 pm in the Christian Brothers Oratory and lead by the clergy and religious in Kells.

Rev. Andrew Watters

Mullingar

Confirmation:

New Years Day was marked by a parish service in Mullingar which included the confirmation of Gail Porter of Raharney and the celebration of the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper. Gail is the daughter of Jeanette and Wilson Porter who are elders of the congregation. A delightful morning tea following the service was enjoyed by the large congregation drawn from all three churches.

Carol Service:

A packed All Saints Church of Ireland Mullingar was the venue for the annual ecumenical service of nine lessons and carols on December 16th. Week of Prayer for Christian Unity: Ecumenical services will take place at Wilson's Hospital School Multyfarnham on Thursday January 19th. commencing at 8 pm and at St. Paul's Roman Catholic Church on Sunday January 22nd. at 4:00 pm.

Farewell:

Mullingar said good-bye in December to Dr. Jennifer who is transferring to Ballinasloe Hospital and to her mother who returned to Pakistan following an extended visit. We also farewelled Dr. Baggy who moved to Coombe Hospital Dublin. For varying periods of time the congregation regularly welcomes doctors from Africa and India / Pakistan who come to further their training at the local hospital.

Rev. Andrew Watters

Corboy

Harvest Festival:

The annual harvest service was held on September 25th. Thank you to all those who helped decorate the church for the occasion. The congregation, visitors from the local community, and those who had grown up in Corboy returning "home" for the event, combined to fill the church for a wonderful service of thanksgiving. The fellowship continued after the service with afternoon tea, much to the credit of the Corboy ladies.

Christmas Day:

The Christmas worship was a delightful occasion aided by the participation of the younger members of the congregation who read the lessons and sang an Iona carol. Thanks is due to all who helped in the preparation and the worship.

Church Repairs:

It is hoped that long awaited repairs to the roof of the church may be undertaken this year. A thorough inspection of the property will take place in January following a grant from the Home Board to underwrite the fees of a builder/architect. The congregation are exploring various avenues of funding for the work.



A Personal Note:

On behalf of Pauline and the children, I would like to express my gratitude to the way we have been welcomed within the congregations and the Presbytery- We are well settled into the manse and life in Kells. The warmth of the congregations' welcome expressed particularly in the many gifts of practical

aid has been greatly appreciated- To use an Australianism, you have all been "beaut"!, making the transition from life in suburban Sydney to Irish town easier than it would otherwise have been. The congregations have taken a chance with an unknown stranger from "Down under" and I trust the experience will be of mutual benefit to all. I also value the interest shown in the progress of my studies at the Irish School of Ecumenics.

Rev. Andrew Watters



Howth and Malahide

We had the usual busy season over Christmas in our churches. Starting on Saturday 3rd December we had a very successful Christmas Fair in Malahide, selling Christmas Cakes, Gifts, Plants and serving coffee. It is a very hectic morning with our hall packed and business brisk.

On Sunday 18th. in the morning we had the Children's Christmas Service in Malahide, when the children in the Sunday School took the service. Our thanks to Jennifer Maxwell and Susan Caldwell for organising it so well. It is a great joy to see and hear the children giving us the Christmas message in their words.

In the afternoon of Sunday 18th. we had the Candlelight Service of Lessons and Carols in Howth Church. The Third Day Chorale Choir led the singing this year. We had a very full Church and there is no doubt that this service has become part of Christmas for many people in the area.

On Christmas morning we had a combined service in Malahide Church. Many friends joined us and helped in the lusty singing of the Carols.

Now with Christmas over for another year and already well into the New Year we would like to wish everyone a very happy and peaceful New Year.

Dorothy Robinson

Kilkenny

Election of Elders:

A recent election of 4 new elders brings the numbers on Kirk Session to 9. The ordination service is planned for 5th. February 1995.

Christian unity:

As well as the usual inter-church greetings, clergy dinner and community worship service, an hour-long programme on Radio Kilkenny gave opportunity for frank, vigorous and friendly discussion of differences between the 4 'main' churches. The reaction of the listening public has been that it is a more meaningful way of establishing genuine friendships and understanding than the 'lets not talk about our differences' approach.

Local radio:

Radio Kilkenny is extremely generous with air time for the churches enabling us to conduct regular Sunday services, 'Thoughts for the day' as well as having input to the weekly churches' magazine programme: 'New Horizons'. Recent programmes have featured 'The Stay Safe' Programme for schools, recent advances in infertility treatment and Paedophilia. A forthcoming programme will focus on 'The place of scripture and tradition in different church traditions'.

Missionary visitors:

Visits from Gordon Campbell (PCI; Marseilles) Merrill Morrow (Interserve- Middle East) and Joanne Robinson (China - OMF) have helped to stimulate missionary vision. A short visit from members of the PCI One-Year team joined in our Youth Programme.



Comings and goings.

We have said sad farewells to 3 medical couples from Pakistan, Nigeria and Egypt and have welcomed a new couple from India.

Rev. John Woodside

Cahir.

The imminent departure of a key family in an already tiny congregation will mean a loss to our small Sunday school as well as of a virtually 'irreplaceable' congregational secretary / treasurer.

Major building work has become necessary because of crumbling external plaster which has harboured damp and become an eyesore. Removal of the plaster and sandblasting of the building will greatly enhance the building's appearance and greatly deplete its finances. Small but faithful attendance at worship continues as does a midweek gathering for prayer and Bible fellowship. The church was packed (100 approx.) for the annual carol service in which the local Choral Society Choir and Silver band contributed and from which St. Vincent de Paul benefited.

Rev. John Woodside



Dublin and Munster Presbytery P.W.A.

The ladies from the Dublin and Munster Presbytery P.W.A. met together for their Annual Conference in York Road, Dun Laoghaire last October.

We were uplifted by the worship, led by our President, Cherry Poynton, and soloist Lorraine Johnson.

We were amused by a humorous sketch by the Clontarf Branch. We were inspired by Helen Kennedy's account of the work of

Nexus Ireland and the Lucan Youth Centre, and we were made to think and work by our special speaker, Miss Nancy Donnell, Central President, whom we were privileged to have with us. Our thanks to Dun Laoghaire Branch for hosting this event, providing us with a very welcome cup of tea and giving us an opportunity to greet old friends and meet new ones. Our next 'get together' will be our Friendship Day Service in Sandymount Church on Sunday 30th April at 4 pm. We look forward to welcoming friends and visitors as well as members.

Hon. Secretary. Dorothy Masterson.



St. Andrews Blackrock

Ordination of new Elders:

October 23rd. saw the ordination of our five new elders. The service was led by the moderator of Dublin and Munster Presbytery, Rev. James Brogan. Our congratulations to the following new elders: Mrs. Susan Anderson, Mrs. Vivienne Boxwell, Mrs. Cherry Poynton, Mrs. Noelle McLoughlin and Mr. George Oswin Martin.

Junior Church:

On the 9th. December (Advent Sunday) morning worship was led by members of our Junior Church, the themes being 'Creation' and 'The birth of Jesus. Well done to all concerned.

The numbers in our Junior Church are steadily growing - Thanks to Mrs. Aylson Boyd for all her good work.

Death:

On Sunday 2nd. October Mr. Justice Herbert McWilliam died. Herbert was a long and dedicated member of our congregation, serving for many years on our Kirk Session and indeed on several committees in the wider Church in Ireland. He will be sadly missed. A memorial service was held for him on Monday 10th. October in York Road Presbyterian Church Dun Laoghaire. St. Andrews was too small to accommodate the large number who

attended. The moderator of the General Assembly was represented by the Rev. Howard Cromie.

Service of re-dedication:

Our service of re-dedication took place on the 6th. of November at which the Rev. James Brogan lead the worship. The service was attended by Mr. Richard Robinson (in charge of decorating) and Mr. Ken Edwards (our colour consultant). Thanks to both for a job well done.

Baptism:

The baptism of Cameron George Lowrie, son of Mr. and Mrs. George Lowrie of Brookville Drive, Blackrock, took place on the 6th. of November.

Centenary year for Blackrock Church:

This year is the centenary year of our Church. On the 12th. of March morning service will be lead by Dr. Donald Caird, Church of Ireland Archbishop of Dublin. The service will be at 11:30 am, and there is lunch for all afterwards. On the 14th. of May our 10:00 am service will be lead by Dr. Godfrey Browne, former moderator of the General Assembly.

More events to be announced in the next issue of Link-Up.

Steven Anderson

St. Andrews Bray

EXILES RETURNED:

We are glad to welcome back to Ireland David and Sarah Paine and their two girls Sarah Louise and Hanna. The Paines have come back to settle here after five years in Sydney, Australia.

LONDON CITY MISSION:

Our congregation has a continuing link with London City Mission. Over the years we have invited a great variety of L.C.M. workers to share in our Sunday worship and to describe their work. We have welcomed to our pulpit evangelists working in industry, missionaries to the docks and harbours, administrators, pastors, and even one missionary whose field of activity was London Transport and its familiar red buses! We are indeed privileged to have the opportunity of supporting such vital work.

AFRICA INLAND MISSION:

Also this autumn we welcomed to morning worship and to the P. W. A. Gordon and Grace McCullough of A.I.M. The McCulloughs are members of our moderator's church in Kilkeel, County Down. They are now based in Kampala, the capital of Uganda, where Gordon is an administrator, supervising the work of A.I.M. missionaries throughout that vast country. Grace is also involved with the mission and with the local churches. We were encouraged to hear that Uganda is recovering from the traumas of recent years, and that missionary work is flourishing.

DISTINGUISHED VISITOR:

On Sunday 14th. of May we will welcome to our pulpit Dr. Godfrey Browne, one of the most distinguished ministers of our church. Dr. Browne was moderator of the General Assembly in 1988. In recent times he made newspaper headlines when, along with Dr. Jack Weir, another ex-moderator, he met with Republican paramilitary leaders in an attempt to persuade them to call off their terrorist campaign. Dr. Browne is no stranger to Bray, and should feel at home here since he has been minister of Ballycastle, County Antrim, another sea-side town, for the past thirty years.

Rev. Denis Campbell.



Sunday School Report:

On Saturday 15th October we had our Sunday School Teacher's Training Day in Naas Presbyterian Church. This was led by Mr. Ossie McAuley, from Church House in Belfast, and was a very helpful time. He addressed issues as such: the role of the teacher; qualifications of a Sunday School teacher; storytelling; children's church; discipline; visual aids; child development and its implications; worship in Sunday School; use of music in Sunday School; building team spirit among teachers; teacher-child relationships; how children learn; child conversion and nurture. We also looked at the preparation, presentation and evaluation of Sunday School lessons. Then

briefly we considered planning a children's service and their input into Sunday worship.

The afternoon ended with a look at some of the excellent teaching material available to us through the use of tapes, books and videos.

Sunday School Project :

The Sunday School Project Packs have been circulated - "Project Barnabas". As a general rule, every third project is a home-based one, so after the two previous projects for Malawi and Brazil, our thoughts this year turn to our own Presbyterian Church here in Ireland. The project supports-

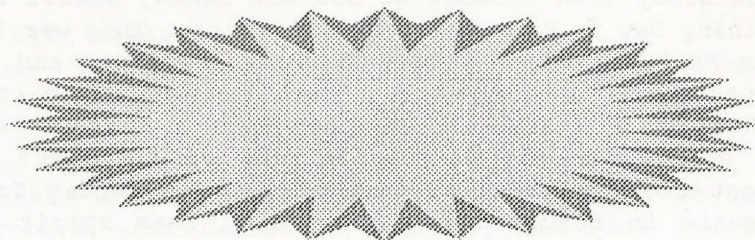
(1). the provision of a minibus to assist in children's and youth club work in the Cavan union of churches and in other congregations of the Monaghan Presbytery within that area.

(2). the provision of wash room and administrative facilities as part of the extension work at Guysmere, Castlerock, which is a seaside residential centre owned by the Youth Board of our Church.

(3). part cost of the refurbishment of 426 Antrim Road, Belfast, which is next door to Thompson House and will therefore provide a much needed extension to those premises. The centre is part of the work of the Social Witness Board.

It is hoped that we will find these three situations worthy of support, and that our children and young people will have the opportunity of learning something of the breadth of important evangelistic and social activity carried on in the name of our Church and of Jesus Christ, the King and Head of the Church.

Rev. Ruth Gregg.



St. Patrick's United Church Waterford

The Christmas season is traditionally, perhaps, the busiest time of the year for our congregation. This year was no exception for St. Patrick's United Church in Waterford. It would be wrong, however, to see the Church year compressed into one month. We could turn our thoughts back to October and our very successful service for Harvest Thanksgiving. At this service we welcomed as our guest preacher, Dr. Edith Loane, currently the President of the World Federation of Methodist Women. She had recently returned from a challenging and inspiring trip to South Africa and also, most recently, from Estonia, where she was present in Tallin at the time of the dreadful tragedy of the sinking of the ferry boat. WE also welcomed the choir from a local school. Their singing was a highlight of the night. The church was well filled with over 200 people present!

Kitui Service:

In November, we held our annual Kitui service. Kitui is a district in Kenya with which Waterford is partner. Our church is partnered with the Mulango children's Home. Each year, Waterford / Kitui partnership welcomes one or two people from Kitui. These are people who would be trying to set up particular types of partnership with specific groups. This year, two teachers from a school for the mentally handicapped came to Waterford to set up new links. They both attended our morning service during which they were interviewed about their work and we were humbled by the faithful devotion shown by them. Afterwards, the congregation shared a bread and cheese lunch and a retiring offering of £220.00 was lifted. This goes towards St. Patrick's annual commitment to Kitui.

Childrens Christmas Tree Service:

December, of course, brought its own highlights. Our Children's Christmas tree service, for example. This is a service when the children (and not a few adults!) bring presents to our Christmas tree for the use of the social care centre. Mary Shillingford, public relations, from the St. Bridget's centre, spoke of the need and benefit of such localised remembering and giving when thanking the congregation for its continued support.

Carol Service:

Our Carol Service was well attended and what made it particularly special was the number of people who participated. Even some who have been telling me for the last two years that they can't read in public. It would be great if we could have such a level of participation in our weekly services throughout the year! Afterwards, it was a pleasure to greet everyone as they came to the manse for 'coffee and mince pies' around the tree.



Christmas Day Service:

Our Christmas Day morning, we shared an encouraging time of worship and reflection (and I had the added pleasure of being able to play with some of the children's toys which we had them bring to the front!)

Methodist Covenant Service:

One of the most important services in the Methodist Church calendar, is the Covenant Service. This takes place at the beginning of the New Year and is a special service of recommitment and re-dedication of the people of God to their covenant God. It is an extremely challenging service which dates back to the beginning of Methodism. Since we are a united Presbyterian / Methodist congregation, we observe this service each year. This year the Rev. Des Bain, from Dublin Central Mission, was preacher and celebrant. We had one of our best attended communions for some time which was a delight. After the service the congregation went out to Tramore, where we enjoyed a formidable 'Bring and Share Lunch'.

Events on the way:

There are a number of events about to happen over the next few months for which we would appreciate the thoughts and prayers of Presbytery

1. Week of prayer for Christian Unity

The special service this year is to be held in St. Patrick's Church at which we look forward to the first

visit to our church from the Bishop of Waterford and Lismore, Rev. Dr. William Lee. He is the guest preacher also. We think this is the first time a Roman Catholic Bishop has preached in St. Patrick's and we think it is the Bishop's first preaching occasion in a protestant church.

2. Week of Prayer for Peace

This is following the call from the Moderator. We hope to mark the week with some activities in the community.

3. New Communicant members classes

These will be starting early in the New Year.

4. Sunday School

We are at the point where we need to begin a major rethink of our whole system. Not easy, but we are grateful to God for our children and Sunday school teachers.

5. The election of new committee

New members will be elected in the spring

6. A proposed election for new Elders

This will also take place in the spring

7. Presbytery Visitation

This is to take place in May. There is much to be done in preparation!

Rev. Fred Vincent

